

St. Matthew Catholic Church

Stained Glass Windows

Written in the 1990s by Fr. Carl Flach (+) and Kathy Sievers in 2017

This supplement the video on the Windows located at:

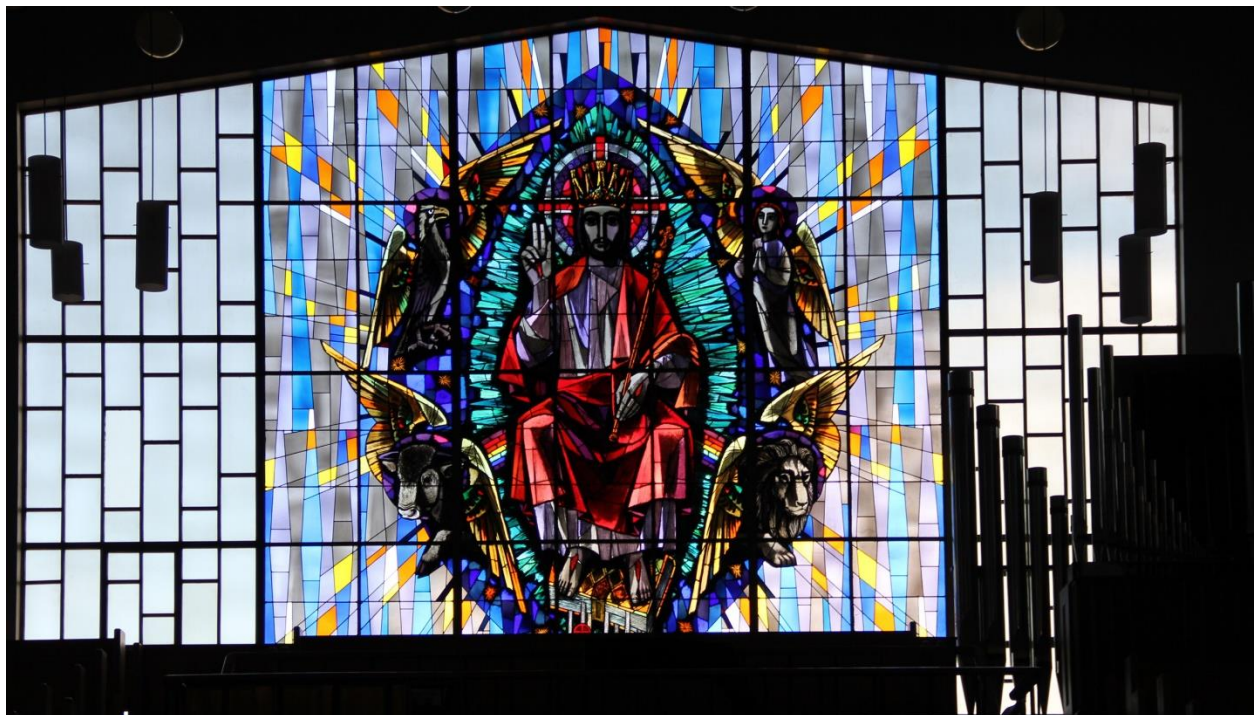
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KcbduladTt8>

Clerestory windows are as old as ancient Egypt. They were used in Roman basilicas and during Romanesque times (10th century). By the time of the Gothic period from the 12th through the 16th centuries, the construction of taller walls allowed for much taller windows. What we see in the St. Matthew stained glass windows are tall windows above the roofline over the lower side aisles and seating. Today, the meaning of clerestory windows includes any windows that are above the line of sight.

From very early in Church history, clerestory windows became a defining element of Christian faith. Their subject matter developed as Christian theology developed.

Christ Enthroned in Glory

We begin with Christ Enthroned in Glory, at the East end of the church. A description of Christ comes from the Book of Prophet Ezekiel 1:4-14, 593-571 BCE (BC) and from the Old Testament. It is also included in Book of Revelation 4:1-11, most likely 81-96 CE (AD) (New Testament). Every window, every element in the church refers to Christ. The Old Testament windows present salvation history and the promise of a messiah. The New Testament windows chronicle Christ's life, particularly his public life of miracles, parables, teaching and sacraments.



From Ezekiel 1:

4 As I watched, a great storm wind came from the North,
a large cloud with flashing fire, a bright glow all around it,
and something like polished metal gleamed at the center of the fire.
5 From within it figures in the likeness of four living creatures* appeared.
This is what they looked like:
6 They were in human form, but each had four faces and four wings,
7 and their legs were straight, the soles of their feet like the hooves of a bull,
gleaming like polished brass.
8 Human hands were under their wings,
and the wings of one touched those of another.
9 Their faces and their wings looked out on all their four sides;
they did not turn when they moved, but each went straight ahead.
10 Their faces were like this: each of the four had a human face,
and on the right the face of a lion, and on the left, the face of an ox,
and each had the face of an eagle.
11 Such were their faces. Their wings were spread out above.
On each one, two wings touched one another,
and the other two wings covered the body.
12 Each went straight ahead. Wherever the spirit would go, they went;
they did not change direction when they moved.
13 And the appearance of the living creatures seemed like burning coals of fire.
Something indeed like torches moved back and forth among the living creatures. The
fire gleamed intensely, and from it lightning flashed.
14 The creatures darting back and forth flashed like lightning.

From Revelation 4:

5 From the throne came flashes of lightning,
rumblings, and peals of thunder.
Seven flaming torches burned in front of the throne,
which are the seven spirits of God.
6 In front of the throne was something that resembled
a sea of glass like crystal.
In the center and around the throne,
there were four living creatures covered with eyes in front and in back.

7 The first creature resembled a lion, the second was like a calf,
the third had a face like that of a human being,
and the fourth looked like an eagle* in flight.

8 The four living creatures, each of them with six wings,*
were covered with eyes inside and out.

Day and night they do not stop exclaiming:

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty,
who was, and who is, and who is to come.”

9 Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor
and thanks to the one who sits on the throne,
who lives forever and ever,

10 the twenty-four elders fall down before the one who sits on the throne
and worship him, who lives forever and ever.

They throw down their crowns before the throne, exclaiming:

11 “Worthy are you, Lord our God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things;

because of your will they came to be and were created.”

Christ is our alpha and omega, our beginning and our ending. All things come through him. All our efforts flow toward and spring from him. With Christ as the foundation for the entire Church, we can address the other church windows. Note the almond shaped area depicted in blue around Christ. This is a mandorla, an ancient symbol of the intersection of two opposites, in this case—human and divine. Watch for the mandorla used as a theme throughout many of the church windows.

The four living creatures surrounding Christ were assigned as attributes of the four Gospel writers. Matthew is shown as a winged man (angel). Mark is shown as a lion, because his Gospel emphasizes Christ’s royalty. Luke is a winged ox, emphasizing the sacrificial aspect of Christ. Finally John is an eagle, referring to the eagles’ wings and the soaring love of God.

Sanctuary Clerestory Windows, South Side--The Sacrifice of Abraham



Gen 22, 9-13

9 When they came to the place of which God had told him, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. Next he bound his son Isaac, and put him on top of the wood on the altar.

10 Then Abraham reached out and took the knife to slaughter his son.

11 But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, "Abraham, Abraham!" "Here I am," he answered.

12 "Do not lay your hand on the boy," said the angel. "Do not do the least thing to him. For now I know that you fear God, since you did not withhold from me your son, your only one."

13 Abraham looked up and saw a single ram caught by its horns in the thicket. So Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering in place of his son.*

On the right is Abraham, whose hand has just been stopped from sacrificing his promised son, Isaac (lower center). To the left we have the angel of God as messenger, staying Abraham's hand. At the bottom is the ram, placed amid the brambles at the center of a red cross. At the very top is the all-seeing eye of God placed within a triangle (Trinity) within a circle (eternity). Note the use of the color red for the cross. Red emphasizes our human efforts to follow Jesus via the way of the cross. Watch for the color red as an important element appearing throughout the church windows, uniting our suffering with Christ's.

During Abraham's time, 6th to 5th centuries BCE (before Christ), the blood sacrifice used by the tribe of Levi was the standard for offerings to God. This window prefigures the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Note the composition of the design: almost the shape of a mandorla.

This window shows our lineage from Abraham, and prefigures God's offering of His own son, which we revisit at each liturgy. Such Eucharistic imagery is used in the sanctuary of the church.

North Side—Melchizedek's Sacrifice



On the North side of the sanctuary we see Melchizedek's sacrifice. Melchizedek was the king of Salem (Jerusalem). The meaning of his name in Hebrew is king of righteousness. His role was two-fold: priest and king. In the window, he is offering a sacrifice of bread and wine to the all-powerful God most high (hand at top of window) in thanksgiving for the recovery of Abraham's nephew, Lot. Abraham is present (in green) with his sword and soldiers, giving his tithe to Melchizedek.

Melchizedek is the lone man in the Old Testament whose father and son are not mentioned; he thus appears as eternal. The words of Scripture, "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek" comes from Psalm 110:4 and from Hebrews 7:17. Prior to Melchizedek, blood sacrifice was normal offering of priests of the tribe of Levi (as seen in the Abraham window). Starting with Melchizedek, bread and wine became the priestly sacrifice. In this window, the sacrifice of Christ in the Eucharist is prefigured. Note once again the red cross near the bottom, and the symbol of God at the top. These form the basis for the mandorla (almond) shaped design. Christ is the new priest, present in the Consecration and in the liturgy, at the table of the Lord.

North Nave Clerestory Windows—Adam and Eve

Along the nave on the North side of the church, we see the beginning of the life of the Church in Christ. The first window near the sanctuary shows Adam and Eve being driven from paradise by an angel.

Genesis 3:22-24

22 Then the LORD God said: See! The man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil! Now, what if he also reaches out his hand to take fruit from the tree of life, and eats of it and lives forever?

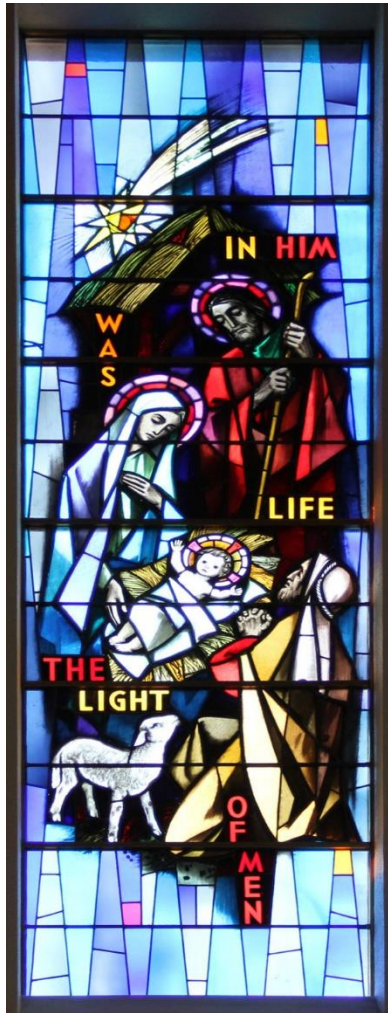
23 The LORD God therefore banished him from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he had been taken.

24 He expelled the man, stationing the cherubim and the fiery revolving sword east of the garden of Eden, to guard the way to the tree of life.



Once again the design is roughly that of a mandorla within the rectangle. Near the top we see the tree with the forbidden fruit. On the right is a depiction of God the Father, whose head is enclosed in a triangle (representing God). The angel with a fiery sword is at the lower right. On the left are Adam and Eve along with animals and flowers in the garden of Eden. Note the red flowers at the bottom rather than the presence of a cross.

The Nativity of Christ



The words, "In him was life, the light of men" are found at the beginning of St. John's Gospel. The scene is mainly from St. Luke's Gospel, including the star of Bethlehem, the barn, a shepherd and a lamb. St. Joseph is shown with his staff, and the Mother of God in pale blue. Christ's head is in the center of the composition, with a cross in his halo. Note the presence of the color red. Note that once again a mandorla (almond shape) encloses the design within the rectangle.

The Crucifixion



The words state, “Life restored through death,” the ultimate paradox of our Christian faith. At left we see the Mother of God; at right St. John. At the top of the cross we see the Roman initials, standing for Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews (**I**esus **N**azarethorum, **R**ex **I**udiorum). Near the bottom is the skull, representing Golgotha (in Hebrew, place of the skull), the site of the Crucifixion.

Again an overall mandorla (almond) shape is used. The cross is brown, and the color red for our unity in Christ’s sacrifice is used throughout. A red cross is seen in Jesus’s halo.

From John 19:

25 Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala.

26 When Jesus saw his mother* and the disciple there whom he loved, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son.”ⁿ

27 Then he said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother.” And from that hour the disciple took her into his home.

Baptism Window



The first window representing a sacrament is that of Baptism, the fourth window along the North nave wall. Mary Magdalene is shown as she recognizes Christ after the Resurrection. We are buried with Jesus so that we can rise with him. The banner shows the red cross, reminding us of Constantine's vision, "In this sign you will conquer." Jesus is triumphant over death. The newness of life is shown at the bottom in the symbols of Baptism, the candle, the shell for the rite of Baptism, the fish representing Christianity..

Note the red cross in Christ's halo, on the banner, and at the bottom, three black crosses at the top indicating the Crucifixion, and a brown cross in Jesus's hand. Seven crosses; one for each day of the week.

John 20:15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?

Whom are you looking for?" She thought it was the gardener and said to him, "Sir, if you carried him away, tell me where you laid him, and I will take him."

16 Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni," which means Teacher.

Sacrament of Penance



The fifth window on the North side of the nave represents the sacrament of Reconciliation. The penitent woman washes Jesus's feet in the home of Peter, Luke 22:7-20. At the top is a building, indicating that the event took place inside. Peter, shown in yellow, is looking on as Jesus addresses the woman.

At the bottom we find the red cross and the keys, which unlock the chain of sin shown at the bottom of the cross.

South Nave Clerestory Windows, West End

The Last Supper



Christ is seated at the head of the table surrounded by the apostles as he offers the bread and wine of the Eucharistic sacrifice. Note Judas, at the upper left, looking away from the gathering. A red cross can be found within Christ's halo, and at the bottom of the mandorla (almond shape) design. In front of the cross at the bottom is a basket of loaves and a fish, referring to the miracle feeding of the five thousand.

Luke 22:7-20

7 When the day of the feast of Unleavened Bread arrived,
the day for sacrificing the Passover lamb,
8 he sent out Peter and John, instructing them,

“Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover.”
9 They asked him, “Where do you want us to make the preparations?”
10 And he answered them, “When you go into the city,
a man will meet you carrying a jar of water.
Follow him into the house that he enters
11 and say to the master of the house,
‘The teacher says to you,
“Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?”’
12 He will show you a large upper room that is furnished.
Make the preparations there.”
13 Then they went off and found everything exactly as he had told them,
and there they prepared the Passover.
14 When the hour came, he took his place at table with the apostles.
15 He said to them, “I have eagerly desired
to eat this Passover* with you before I suffer,
16 for, I tell you, I shall not eat it [again]
until there is fulfillment in the kingdom of God.”
17 Then he took a cup,* gave thanks, and said,
“Take this and share it among yourselves;
18 for I tell you [that] from this time on
I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine
until the kingdom of God comes.”
19 Then he took the bread, said the blessing,
broke it, and gave it to them, saying,
“This is my body, which will be given for you;
do this in memory of me.”
20 And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying,
“This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you.

From John 6:

4 The Jewish feast of Passover was near.
5* When Jesus raised his eyes and saw
that a large crowd was coming to him,
he said to Philip,^ε “Where can we buy enough food for them to eat?”
6* He said this to test him, because he himself knew what he was going to do.
7 Philip answered him, “Two hundred days’ wages* worth of food
would not be enough for each of them to have a little [bit].”
8 One of his disciples, Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, said to him,

9 “There is a boy here who has five barley loaves* and two fish;
but what good are these for so many?”

10 Jesus said, “Have the people recline.”

Now there was a great deal of grass* in that place.

So the men reclined, about five thousand in number.

11 Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks,
and distributed them to those who were reclining,
and also as much of the fish as they wanted.

12 When they had had their fill, he said to his disciples,
“Gather the fragments left over, so that nothing will be wasted.”

13 So they collected them, and filled twelve wicker baskets*
with fragments from the five barley loaves
that had been more than they could eat.

14 When the people saw the sign he had done,
they said, “This is truly the Prophet,* the one who is to come into the world.”

15 Since Jesus knew that they were going to come
and carry him off to make him king,
he withdrew again to the mountain alone.

Confirmation



The sacrament of Confirmation is included in the Pentecost window. We see the apostles and the Mother of God gathered, with flames above their heads. Note that Peter is front left with the keys, and Paul is front right with a book and pen. The Mother of God is in the center. At the bottom we see the dove as the Holy Spirit, with seven flames representing the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, knowledge, counsel, fortitude, piety, understanding and fear of the Lord (wonder). Note the mandorla shape.

Acts 2:1-4

1 When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled,
they were all in one place together.
2 And suddenly there came from the sky
a noise like a strong driving wind,
and it filled the entire house in which they were.
3 Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire,
which parted and came to rest on each one of them.
4 And they were all filled with the holy Spirit
and began to speak in different tongues,
as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.

The Sacrament of Marriage



Jesus is shown with his mother, and the wedding couple in the background. Jesus is blessing the wine at their marriage, his first public miracle; the Wedding at Cana. Note the red cross at the bottom, two rings intertwined, and hands joined together, symbols of marriage and faithfulness.

John 2: 1-11

- 1 On the third day there was a wedding* in Cana* in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.
- 2 Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding.
- 3 When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."
- 4 [And] Jesus said to her, "Woman, how does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come."
- 5 His mother said to the servers, "Do whatever he tells you."
- 6 Now there were six stone water jars there for Jewish ceremonial washings,

each holding twenty to thirty gallons.

7 Jesus told them, "Fill the jars with water."

So they filled them to the brim.

8 Then he told them,

"Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter."

So they took it.

9 And when the headwaiter tasted the water that had become wine,
without knowing where it came from

(although the servers who had drawn the water knew),

the headwaiter called the bridegroom

10 and said to him, "Everyone serves good wine first,

and then when people have drunk freely, an inferior one;

but you have kept the good wine until now."

11 Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs* in Cana in Galilee

and so revealed his glory, and his disciples began to believe in him.

Note the mandorla (almond) shape, and the presence of the red cross at the bottom of the composition, and in Christ's halo..

Holy Orders



Acts 1:6-11

6 When they had gathered together they asked him,
“Lord, are you at this time going* to restore the kingdom to Israel?”
7 He answered them,
“It is not for you to know the times or seasons
that the Father has established by his own authority.
8 But you will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you,
and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem,
throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”
9 When he had said this, as they were looking on,
he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight.
10 While they were looking intently at the sky as he was going,
suddenly two men dressed in white garments stood beside them.
11 They said, “Men of Galilee, why are you standing there looking at the sky?
This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven
will return in the same way as you have seen him going into heaven.”

We see Jesus at his Ascension, with two angels below him. Jesus ascends, leaving his priestly authority in the sacrament of Holy Orders, shown by symbols near the bottom. The stole indicates authority, the hand is raised in a sign of forgiveness, the Gospel book also indicates authority as well as preaching, and the red cross accompanies all of us on our Christian journey.

Anointing of the Sick



The last clerestory window on the South side nearest the sanctuary is the Anointing of the Sick. Jesus is shown healing the paralyzed man, whose friends have lowered with a rope through a hole in the roof. At the bottom we see all that happens through the power of the cross. Life symbolized as a candle, and the hour glass represents death. In addition, we see the palms of victory.

Mark 2:1-12

1 When Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days,
it became known that he was at home.
2 Many gathered together
so that there was no longer room for them,
not even around the door,
and he preached the word to them.
3 They came bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men.
4 Unable to get near Jesus because of the crowd,
they opened up the roof above him.
After they had broken through,

they let down the mat on which the paralytic was lying.

5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic,

“Child, your sins are forgiven.”

6 Now some of the scribes were sitting there asking themselves,

7 “Why does this man speak that way?*

He is blaspheming.

Who but God alone can forgive sins?”

8 Jesus immediately knew in his mind

what they were thinking to themselves, so he said,

“Why are you thinking such things in your hearts?

9 Which is easier, to say to the paralytic,

‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say,

‘Rise, pick up your mat and walk’?

10 But that you may know that the Son of Man

has authority to forgive sins on earth”—

11 he said to the paralytic,

“I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home.”

Local Level, North Side at West End

After looking at all the clerestory windows that show salvation history, the birth and death of Jesus, the sacraments of the Church, and Christ enthroned in Glory, we move to the lower or local level of windows. The subjects for these windows represent the prayer of the local Church community.

St. Joseph



Beginning on the North side, we see the Joseph window.

The statue of Joseph once stood in front of this window on a side altar. To allow room for musicians and choirs, the statue was moved to the shelf mounted on the wrought iron on the North side of the sanctuary. Joseph is part of the Holy Family.

St. Matthew

Next on the North side street level is the window behind St. Matthew, our parish patron saint, who was a member of the tribe of Levi (like Abraham). St. Matthew was chosen as the name of the community because when the parish was founded, Hillsboro was the location to pay local taxes. This is true today, as well.



Matthew's Gospel begins with:

1 The book of the origin (genealogy) of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

This Gospel passage refers to the two great promises of the Old Testament. The first was to Abraham, that he would be the father of a great nation. The next promise was to David to be the father of the great Messiah.

St. John Vianney



St. John Vianney is the patron saint of parish priests. He was born in France, three years prior to their revolution, and died at age 73 in 1859. Because of the unrest at the time, John lacked schooling, and struggled when he entered the seminary. He was sent to Ars as a pastor. He sometimes heard confession 16 hours a day. He lived a life of penance and converted the town of Ars. Later in his life all of France was reconciled to the Church through him.

John's presence reminds us of the priesthood, of vocations, and humble service. He also reminds us that each of us is called to be priest, prophet, and king, as we follow Jesus.

St. Peter Julian Eymard

St. Peter Julian lived from 1811 to 1868. He was ordained for the diocese of Grenoble, France, and later joined the Marists. His life was centered on the Blessed Sacrament. In 1858 he established the religious congregation Servants of the Blessed Sacrament.



St. Peter Julian's legacy continues in our community through the Eucharist and through Adoration.

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque

Born in Burgundy, France, St. Margaret Mary was a pious child. Her father died when she was eight and relatives helped raise her. She entered the Visitation convent in Paray Le Monial. During the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, she had a vision of Jesus who told her of his great love for human beings. Jesus urged her to spread the devotion to the Sacred Heart. She died in 1690.



Note that this window does not include a mandorla in its design. A cross is included in Christ's halo and is shown next to other prayer items, including Scripture.

Let the Children Come, South East side of the church cry room.

The image of Jesus and children in the cry room of the church comes from the Gospel of St. Matthew 19:14.

But Jesus said, “Let the children come to me,
and do not prevent them;
for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”



Jesus welcomes the children, some of whom come bringing flowers. This tradition remains with us today, as children bring flowers on special occasions, such as the feast of Our Lady of Vailankanni (Our Lady of Good Health) and the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Note the absence of a cross at the bottom of the composition. However, a cross is included in Christ's halo. No mandorla in this window, either.

Jesus asks each us to become as little children to enter God's Kingdom.

St. Therese of Lisieux, South Side of the Church, West End

St. Therese, also called the little flower, lived from 1873-1897. Her mother died when she was four, and her sisters raised her. She followed two of her sisters and entered the Carmelite monastery in Lisieux. Her superior was her sister, who encouraged her to write her autobiography. She wrote *Story of a Soul* which gives deep insight into her prayer and holiness. She was named as a Doctor of the Church in 1997.

Note that she holds a cross in her arms, and that she is shown with flowers. She is the patron saint of missions.



St. Joan of Arc

Joan was born in Domremy, France, in 1412. This was just prior to a civil war, and later the English invaded. She did not learn to read and write, but was good at sewing and spinning. At age 14 she started hearing voices of saints. At 16 she was told to present herself to the local lord to fight. The local leader refused to let her join. She fought for King Charles. She was captured by the English who condemned her as a witch and a heretic. She was martyred by being burned at the stake when she was 19 years old, in 1431.

St. Joan is the patron saint of France, of martyrs, captives, militants, and those ridiculed for their piety, among others. She is also a role model for the zeal of young people.



St. Francis of Assisi

Francis lived from 1181-1226 in Italy. In his youth he focused on enjoying himself. Later he was a soldier and met a poor man on the road, which caused him to ponder his own life. He later met a leper and kissed his wounds. He worked in hospitals and gave away his possessions. Many thought he was mad. His father disinherited him. Francis began begging for the poor and to rebuild an old church. Many men and women followed his way of life. He had a great regard for nature and animals. He is sometimes called the closest follower of Jesus in history. He received stigmata. He is respected by Catholics and non-Catholics alike. St. Francis is the patron of animals, merchants, and ecology.



The Blessed Virgin Mary, South Side of Church, Nearest to Sanctuary



The window nearest the sanctuary on the South side of the church is behind the statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the Mary corner. This side altar window resembles the other church windows, with one important difference: the window is lit by electricity, not by the sun. Due to the design of the church building, a false window was included.

Mary's significant importance in our faith is shown by the side altar, with statue and prayer candles for offerings, and with the statue of Mary before the wrought iron screen on the South side of the church, seen below. Her statue in front of the wrought is a counterpart to Joseph's statue on the North side, creating a Holy Family.



Additional Exterior Window



To honor the history of St. Matthew Parish, a window from the original church building was installed behind the Mary corner on the south exterior side of the new church. Near the top is a tabernacle, with a cross on its face. As the window is not lit, its subject matter is difficult to decipher.

Baptism Window, Church Entrance



We end at the beginning: life in Christ. The brilliant window between the main doors of the East church entrance shows the sacrament of Baptism. It is a gift that comes from Christ, who is above this window Enthroned in Glory. Christ sent his Spirit to remain with us. Top center is the dove representing the Holy Spirit, with the light of faith reaching out to all of us. At the bottom center we see a hand holding a shell with water flowing out of it, representing the waters of Baptism, and the font which stands before it. At the bottom of the window is the river of life, the saving water of Jesus, complete with fish—an early symbol of Christianity.

On the left side are praying hands holding a cross. This represents the Church at prayer and our unity with Christ via the cross. The cross and yellow circle resemble the monstrance before which we pray in adoration. On the right are two palms crossed over a sword, showing Christ's victory over death, which we share through Baptism and life in the Church.

In the mid-nineteen sixties when the church was designed, small baptismal fonts were standard. After the conclusion of Vatican II and the renewal of the Catechumen program for adult Baptism, larger fonts began to be constructed for adult immersion.

Our window immerses us in the light of faith in Jesus Christ, and we move within the flow of this river of life as we gather for and proceed from the Eucharist.